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ABSTRACT

To help teachers and administrators evaluate and improve their reading programs, standards of excellence are presented for seven program components: administration and organization, student assessment, instruction and management, instructional materials, evaluation, staff and staff development, and community involvement. Procedures are suggested for reaching each of the standards, and the person or group with primary responsibility for carrying out these procedures is given. (Author/AA)

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Standards of Excellence for Reading Programs in Iowa Schools

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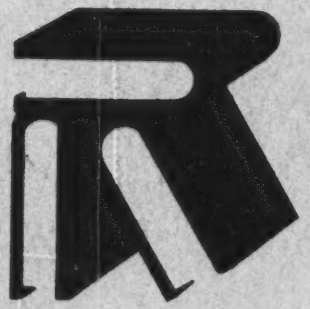

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Introduction

The Standards of Excellence for Reading Programs in Iowa Schools has been prepared by the Iowa Right to Read Advisory Council for use by local school districts working toward the improvement of their reading programs. It draws on the experience of teachers and administrators at all levels of education and is written for educators who are asking the following questions:

1. "Is our reading program as good as it can be?"

2. "How can we develop the reading program best suited for our students?"

To answer these questions, this book has been developed around seven components perceived as necessary for an effective program. These components are, 1) administration and organization, 2) student assessment, 3) instruction and management, 4) instructional materials, 5) evaluation, 6) staff and staff development, and 7) community involvement. Standards of Excellence, which are the indicators of an effective program, are listed within each component. Procedures are suggested for reaching each of the standards, and the person or group with the primary responsibility for carrying out these procedures is given.

No one book can be a complete guide, but this one is designed to be helpful in a number of ways:

- It suggests procedures for developing your reading program.
- It serves as a checklist--reminder on important aspects of the procedures which you might have forgotten.
- It provides a way to organize your thinking and planning about specific activities.
- It provides you with strategies and procedures which have been used successfully by others.

Members of the Standards of Excellence Sub-committee were Sister Mary Edward Dolan, Grace Leinen, Tom Miller, Wanda Morgan, Doris Roettger, and Earl Willits.

Administration and Organization

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *The School Board makes a commitment that places the teaching of reading as one of the priorities of the school district.*

2. *There is administrative leadership and support for the reading program.*

3. *There are role definitions for all persons involved in the instructional process.*

4. *There is system-wide coordination and articulation of all administrative units within the reading program.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Develop a written policy indicating the importance of a comprehensive reading program, pre-school through adult.	Local Board of Education
1.2 Provide the human resources, financial resources, and time for staff development which are essential for a reading program of high quality.	Local Board of Education
2.1 Schedule time and finances within the school calendar for curriculum planning, development, and evaluation.	Superintendent and/or Curriculum Director
3.1 Define roles of all persons involved in the reading program. • Classroom teacher • Special reading teacher • Reading consultant and/or coordinator • Learning disabilities teacher • Principal • Speech and hearing clinician • School psychologist • Other 3.2 Inform the above persons of their roles.	Superintendent and/or Curriculum Director
4.1 Establish a reading committee which meets on a regular basis with representation from each of the areas. • Principals • School reading teacher • District reading teacher • Elementary and secondary teachers • Librarian • Counselor • Support staff • Parents	Superintendent and/or Curriculum Director

Administration and Organization

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4. *There is system-wide coordination and articulation of all administrative units within the reading program.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
4.2 Determine functions of reading committee which might include: a. Planning for system-wide coordinated curriculum b. Surveying the types of reading programs available within the district such as developmental reading, corrective reading, programs for gifted, LD programs, study-type programs, ESEA Title I. c. Setting priorities related to students' needs d. Determining goals and objectives which are consistent with priorities e. Designing assessment of student needs f. Developing strategies for achieving objectives g. Planning evaluation procedures h. Recommending modification as needed i. Providing information regarding program to total staff	Superintendent and/or Curriculum Director
4.3 Assign a staff member the responsibility to coordinate the reading committee.	Superintendent
4.4 Schedule dialogue sessions for: a) staffs of various reading programs such as Title I, II, III, IV, General Education, Special Education, Vocational Education, Adult Education. b) teachers within grade level and across grade lines.	Curriculum Director and/or Principal
4.5 Assess all facets of a building's reading program to determine its strengths and deficiencies.	Principal
4.6 Provide opportunity for staff input regarding a building's reading program and student performance.	Principal
4.7 Coordinate the total reading program within the building.	Principal
4.8 Encourage personnel of the various reading programs to consult with one another when ordering materials.	Curriculum Director and/or Principal

Administration and Organization

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

5. *There is a carefully planned, clearly defined reading curriculum for students at all levels.*

6. *There is a continuous progress organization of the reading curriculum, K-12, to preclude gaps and omissions.*

7. *There are identifiable goals and learning outcomes.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
5.1 Develop a clearly written statement regarding students' • Attitude toward reading • Mastery of reading skills • Reading of subject areas • Mastery of study skills	Reading Committee
6.1 Develop a single articulated, K-12 scope and sequence of skills.	Reading Committee
7.1 Develop, write, and adopt comprehensive and flexible goals and learning outcomes for existing and projected reading programs in both the cognitive and affective areas. The specific outcomes may be derived from: • Commercially prepared objectives • District prepared objectives • Objectives from the basal reading series • Combination of the above	Curriculum Director and Reading Committee

Student Assessment

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *There is a decision-making process based on a comprehensive on-going needs assessment of students' interests, attitudes, and competencies.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Establish procedures for screening kindergarten or first grade children: • Auditory acuity and perception • General health • Social and emotional development • Speech and language development • Visual acuity and perception	Principal and Reading Committee
1.2 Assess students' reading performance through: • Criterion referenced objectives or tests • Informal inventories • Standardized tests • Systematic observations	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading teacher LD Teacher
1.3 Assess students' attitudes toward reading through a: • Reading attitude scale • Reading biography • Systematic observation • Teacher-student conference	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.4 Assess students' interests through: • Inventories • Systematic observation • Teacher-parent conferences • Teacher-student conferences	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers
1.5 Analyze results of the assessments and determine students' strengths and weaknesses.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher

Management and Instruction

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *There is a management procedure which provides for continuous student progress.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Provide time and means for staff to coordinate all facets of a student's program.	Principal
1.2 Use the school's scope and sequence of reading skills to formulate or select specific objectives for students.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.3 Involve students in the planning of instruction.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.4 Measure each student's performance in terms of objectives.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.5 Record individual student's progress.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.6 Inform students of their progress and involve them in regular self-evaluation through teacher-student conferences.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.7 Provide information on student progress to parents.	Principal and Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
1.8 Keep administrator abreast of students' progress	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher

Management and Instruction

2. *There is an accommodation of the varying rates of learning and special needs, interests and problems of all students.*

3. *There are differentiated modes of instruction and patterns in grouping.*

4. *There is recognition and accommodation for racial, cultural, sexual, and age differences.*

5. *There is an organized program planned for all members of the class.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
2.1 Provide differentiated levels and content of instruction in accordance with diagnostic assessments for: • Students making adequate progress • Students whose reading achievement is below average for their age and/or grade • Students whose reading achievement is very high for their age and/or grade • Students whose English speaking ability is limited.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
3.1 Organize the classroom to allow for flexible groups such as skills, achievement, interest, and project groups.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers
3.2 Use modes and rates of instruction to meet students' needs.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
4.1 Become knowledgeable of differences in cultures and provide for them through instruction.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
4.2 Provide for developmental and sexual differences through instruction.	
5.1 Look at all data collected by formal and informal instruments.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
5.2 Decide initial priorities for all members of the class within scope and sequence of reading objectives.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers
5.3 Plan instructional programs.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher

Management and Instruction

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

5. *There is an organized program planned for all members of the class.*

6. *There is instruction in reading and study techniques in all subject areas.*

7. *There is a positive environment in the school which reflects commitment to the importance and enjoyment of reading.*

8. *There are creative activities to encourage curiosity, positive attitudes, and intellectual growth which are an integral part of the program.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
5.4 Conduct continuous evaluation and revise priorities and instructional programs on the basis of new information.	Elementary and Secondary Classroom Teachers Reading Teacher LD Teacher
6.1 Teach the vocabulary used in the discipline.	Subject Area Teachers
6.2 Teach, practice, and apply the reading and study skills necessary for mastery of concepts within the framework of the subject area.	Subject Area Teachers
6.3 Direct students in the use of resources in the library/media center in conjunction with classroom assignments.	Librarians/Media persons
7.1 Provide "quiet" places in the library/media center for recreational and functional reading activities.	School Librarian
7.2 Encourage teachers to provide time daily for students and teachers to read for recreation.	Principal
7.3 Encourage recreational reading by providing a variety of books, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers.	School Librarian
7.4 Schedule uninterrupted time for pleasure reading.	Classroom Teachers
7.5 Use intriguing ways to interest students in books and in a variety of reading material in each area of instruction.	Classroom Teachers
7.6 Provide opportunities for students to share books they have read.	Classroom Teachers
8.1 Encourage creative activities in response to reading.	Classroom Teachers

Instructional Materials

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *There are varied and appropriate materials for instruction.*

2. *There are adequate and appropriate reading materials in all subject areas.*

3. *There are materials free of racial and sexual bias.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Develop a written policy and procedure for the evaluation and selection of materials and media.	Reading Committee
1.2 Involve teachers in the selection of materials and media.	Curriculum Director and/or Principal
1.3 Select instructional materials based on: • Objectives of the reading program • Developmental needs of the learner	Entire Staff
1.4 Provide advanced reading materials for the more able readers.	Classroom Teacher Reading Teacher
1.5 Provide easier reading materials for students with lower reading achievement.	Classroom Teacher Reading Teacher
1.6 Organize materials and equipment for efficient use.	Principal Entire Staff
2.1 Use multi-level materials appropriate to the reading levels of the students in all subject areas.	Classroom Teacher Reading Teacher
3.1 Ensure that Title IX guidelines are met.	Superintendent Curriculum Director

Evaluation

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *There is a systematic on-going evaluation of the reading program.*

2. *The evaluation serves as a means of constant improvement.*

3. *There is self-evaluation of teaching performance.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Evaluate the degree to which the goals and objectives of the program have been met.	Principal and Staff
1.2 Involve all segments of the school when the reading program is evaluated.	Principal and Staff
2.1 Determine needed modification of the program.	Principal and Staff
2.2 Plan for and implement modifications of program.	Principal and Staff
2.3 Set new program priorities.	Principal and Staff
3.1 Develop continuous systematic self-evaluation procedures to direct and improve teaching performance.	Classroom Teachers
3.2 Use self-evaluation procedures to direct and improve teaching performance.	Classroom Teachers

Staff and Staff Development

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. *The School Board designates a person within the school who has the responsibility for the development, maintenance, and coordination of a total reading program.*

2. *There are employment policies which encourage the staff to be competent in the teaching of reading.*

3. *There is an on-going program of staff development.*

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Provide the necessary support, facilities, staff, and time for developing, maintaining, and coordinating a comprehensive reading program.	Board of Education
1.2 Develop strategies for the coordination of all reading programs	Principal and/or person designated by Board of Education
2.1 Actively seek candidates with competencies in the teaching of reading.	Board of Education
2.2 Provide for the principal and the entire staff in each school to be held responsible for developing and implementing a total reading curriculum.	
2.3 Require elementary teachers to maintain competency in the teaching of reading.	Board of Education
2.4 Require secondary teachers to be competent in teaching students how to read their subject area.	Board of Education
2.5 Require principals to be competent in managing the building reading program.	Board of Education
3.1 Involve the reading consultant, classroom teachers, reading teachers, administrators, substitutes, aides, parent volunteers, and support personnel in planning the inservice education programs on a long term basis.	Curriculum Director

3.2 Plan for a variety of inservice program formats such as:
• Workshops
• Mini Courses
• Planned visitation to other classes
• Local, state, regional and national conferences
  • International Reading Association
  • Association for Children with Learning Disabilities
  • Iowa Council of Teachers of English
  • Association for Childhood Education.
	Total Staff

Community Involvement

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STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1. A Community Involvement Council is established.

2. Public is made aware of deficiencies in students' performance in reading and in study skills.

3. Public support is amassed.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Establish a Community Involvement Council composed of: • Members of the business community • Parents • Other members of the public • Members of the news media • Members of the education community	Superintendent
1.2 Inform council of: • Problems in programs and student's performance • Existing programs • Plans for future programs	Superintendent
1.3 Determine attitudes and ratings of businessmen regarding deficiencies noted in prospective employees and skills needed.	Community Council
1.4 Survey parents regarding their: • Attitude toward importance of reading skills • Attitude toward adequacy of present programs • Recommendations to correct deficiencies • Support for a comprehensive program, K-12.	Community Council
1.5 Survey recent graduates regarding what they needed most in reading and study skills. • College bound • Vocational	Community Involvement Council
1.6 Survey higher education institutions regarding deficiencies of incoming students.	Community Involvement Council
2.1 Publicize information gathered from the various sources.	Community Involvement Council
3.1 Publicize available services that can correct deficiencies. 3.2 Make recommendations to Board of Education.	Community Involvement Council